

# Utah

## Adoption Assistance- Who Do You Contact?

### State Contact Information

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Adoption Assistance Specialist</b></p> <p>NAME: Marty Shannon, Program Manager</p> <p>ADDRESS: Department of Human Services Division of Child &amp; Family Services 12 North 200 West, Suite 225 Salt Lake City, Utah 84103</p> <p>E-MAIL: <a href="mailto:mshannon@utah.gov">mshannon@utah.gov</a></p> <p>TELEPHONE: 801.538.3913</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ICAMA Compact Administrator Or Contact</b></p> <p>NAME: Michael Chapman</p> <p>ADDRESS: Department of Human Services Division of Child &amp; Family Services 12 North 200 West, Suite 225 Salt Lake City, Utah 84103</p> <p>E-MAIL: <a href="mailto:mchapman@utah.gov">mchapman@utah.gov</a></p> <p>TELEPHONE: 801.538.4364</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Adoption Program Manager or Contact</b></p> <p>NAME: Kathy Searle</p> <p>ADDRESS: Adoption Exchange 5302 West 5400 South, Suite 207 Salt Lake City, Utah 84107</p> <p>E-MAIL: <a href="mailto:ks@adoptx.org">ks@adoptx.org</a></p> <p>E-ADDRESS: <a href="http://www.utdcfsadopt.org">www.utdcfsadopt.org</a></p> <p>TELEPHONE: 866.872.7212</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ICPC Compact Administrator Or Contact</b></p> <p>NAME: Michael Chapman</p> <p>ADDRESS: Department of Human Services Division of Child &amp; Family Services 12 North 200 West, Suite 225 Salt Lake City, Utah 84103</p> <p>E-MAIL: <a href="mailto:mchapman@utah.gov">mchapman@utah.gov</a></p> <p>TELEPHONE: 801.538.4364</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Post Adoption Services Contact</b></p> <p>NAME: Kathy Searle</p> <p>ADDRESS: Adoption Exchange 5302 West 5400 South, Suite 207 Salt Lake City, Utah 84107</p> <p>E-MAIL: <a href="mailto:ks@adoptx.org">ks@adoptx.org</a></p> <p>E-ADDRESS: <a href="http://www.utdcfsadopt.org">utdcfsadopt.org</a></p> <p>TELEPHONE: 866.872.7212</p> <p><i>Note: Each region of the state has a post-adoption services specialist. Contact Kathy Seale for information to connect to your regional post adoption services specialist.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Medical Assistance Specialist</b></p> <p>NAME: Cosette Mills, Manager</p> <p>ADDRESS: Department of Human Services Division of Child &amp; Family Services 12 North 200 West, Suite 225 Salt Lake City, Utah 84103</p> <p>E-MAIL: <a href="mailto:cmills@utah.gov">cmills@utah.gov</a></p> <p>E-ADDRESS: <a href="http://www.health.utah.gov/html/utah_medicaid.html">http://www.health.utah.gov/html/utah_medicaid.html</a></p> <p>TELEPHONE: 801.538.4058</p>

## **Adoption Assistance- Who is Eligible?**

**A good place to start.** Public adoption in Utah is administered by the Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS). DHS, DCFS, and adoption links: [www.dhs.utah.gov/](http://www.dhs.utah.gov/), [www.hsdcfs.utah.gov/](http://www.hsdcfs.utah.gov/), and [www.utdcfsadopt.org](http://www.utdcfsadopt.org).

- 1. What specific factors or conditions does your state consider to determine that a child cannot be placed with adoptive parents without providing financial assistance? (*"What is your state definition of special needs?"*)**

A child with special needs is defined as a child that has at least one of the following needs or circumstances that may be a barrier to placement or adoption without financial assistance:

- Five years of age or older
- Member of a sibling group placed together for adoption
- Physical, emotional, or mental handicap and under the age of eighteen

- 2. What are the eligibility criteria for your state-funded adoption assistance program?**

In order to be eligible for state-funded adoption assistance a child must be a special needs child as defined above and have been in the custody of the state of Utah.

- 3. What is the maximum amount a family may receive in non-recurring adoption expenses from your state? Adoptive parents can receive reimbursement of certain approved, "one-time" adoption expenses incurred in the process of finalizing a special needs adoption.**

\$2,000.00

- 4. Does your state enter into deferred adoption assistance agreements? In some states, adoptive parents can enter into an agreement in which they choose to defer the receipt of a Medicaid card, the monthly monetary payment, or both and can elect to receive the Medicaid care and/or monetary payment at another time.**

Utah offers deferred adoption assistance.

- 5. When may adoption assistance payments and benefits begin in your state?**

Adoption assistance payments and benefits may begin in Utah at adoption placement. Adoption assistance can be also be secured after adoption finalization when circumstances warrant.

- 6. How are changes made to the adoption assistance agreement in your state?**

- a. When can a parent request a change in the adoption assistance agreement?
- b. How does a parent request a change in the adoption assistance agreement?
- c. What if a parent does not receive the change they request in the adoption assistance agreement?

Parents can call, send a letter, or make an in-person request of their adoption assistance worker to change their adoption assistance agreement at any time. Utah sends a recertification letter annually to parents of children receiving adoption assistance. The letter includes a form that asks parents if they are still providing care, are legally responsible for the child, and provides an option to request changes to the adoption assistance agreement. Parents are instructed to complete the form and return it to the adoption assistance worker by mail or in person. Contact local DCFS offices through the directory of offices, link: [www.hsdcs.utah.gov/directory\\_offices.htm](http://www.hsdcs.utah.gov/directory_offices.htm).

## **Adoption Assistance- Post Adoption Services**

### **7. What types of post adoption services are available in your state and how do I find out more about them?**

Post adoption services in Utah are administered by the DHS, Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) through DCFS, contracted agencies, and parent organizations. Post adoption services include the following examples:

- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. Information and referral | 6. Parent chat room                           |
| 2. Quarterly newsletter     | 7. Respite                                    |
| 3. Lending library          | 8. Training trainers programs                 |
| 4. Educational classes      | 9. Factsheets                                 |
| 5. Support groups           | 10. Search and Reunion assistance/information |

Several private organizations in Utah offer a variety of respite options. Utah's Respite Programs link: [www.respitelocator.org/ustates.htm](http://www.respitelocator.org/ustates.htm). Utah contracts with the Adoption Exchange for many services. Utah's post adoption services through the Adoption Exchange link: [www.utdcfsadopt.org/index.html](http://www.utdcfsadopt.org/index.html). See the column to the left under Post Adoption Resources. The quarterly newsletter directs parents to their post-adoption service worker for contact information to answer questions regarding post-adoption services.

Note: Not all services may be available in all cases. Contact your adoption assistance worker or post adoption services contact for information regarding process, eligibility, availability, and duration of services.

## **Adoption Assistance- Medical assistance**

### **8. What mental health services are provided by your state?**

Public mental health services for children in Utah are administered by the Department of Health through Public Mental Health Centers and their contracted providers. Mental health services are offered under the state Medicaid plan and include the following examples: diagnostic and rehabilitative services, individual and family psychotherapy, skills training and development, physician services, and prescription drugs.

Utah's Medicaid link: [www.health.utah.gov/html/utah\\_medicaid.html](http://www.health.utah.gov/html/utah_medicaid.html) and a listing and description of its mental health services at [www.health.utah.gov/medicaid/pdfs/mentalhealth.pdf](http://www.health.utah.gov/medicaid/pdfs/mentalhealth.pdf). See also Utah's Adoption Connection page under *Post Adoption Resources, Mental Health*. Link: [www.utdcfsadopt.org/index.html](http://www.utdcfsadopt.org/index.html).

Note: Not all services may be available in all cases. Contact your adoption assistance worker or medical assistance specialist for information regarding process, eligibility, availability, and duration of services.

**9. Does your state provide additional finances or services for medical or therapeutic needs not covered under your state medical plan to children receiving adoption assistance?**

Utah provides a payment through what is known as *Supplemental Adoption Assistance Agreements* that are for 6-12 months. Requests for up to \$3, 000 can be approved within an agency, up to \$10, 000 by a Regional Adoption Assistance Committee, and requests over \$10, 000 are sent to a state-wide Supplemental Adoption Assistance Committee comprised of representatives from all five of Utah's regional offices.

Note: Not all services may be available in all cases. Contact your adoption assistance worker for information regarding process, eligibility, availability, and duration of services.

## **Adoption Assistance- Fair Hearings**

**10. What is your state's process for applying for a fair hearing? A fair hearing is a legal, administrative procedure that provides a forum to address disagreements with agency decisions.**

Adoptive parents may send a written request for a fair hearing to the Utah Department of Human Services any time an adoption assistance application is not acted upon promptly, a family is denied adoption assistance, adoption assistance is reduced, or adoption assistance is not funded at the requested rate. Notification of the right to a fair hearing (also known as an appeal) and an explanation of the hearing process are sent to the family. Parents are directed to read the notification and send it back to the agency indicating they wish to request a fair hearing. See the Utah Administrative Code (state law) for a complete outline of fair hearing process and procedures under UT Admin Code R994-406. Appeal Procedures, link: [www.rules.utah.gov/publicat/code/r994/r994-406.htm](http://www.rules.utah.gov/publicat/code/r994/r994-406.htm).

## **Adoption Assistance- Web/Internet Information**

**11. What is your state Web address for general adoption information?**

Utah's general adoption assistance information link: [www.utdcfsadopt.org](http://www.utdcfsadopt.org). See list of terms in upper left-hand corner, choose "FAQs" or click beneath "Post Adoption Resources" for specific information in an area of interest.

**12. What is your state Web address for adoption assistance information?**

Utah's adoption assistance information link: [www.utdcfsadopt.org](http://www.utdcfsadopt.org). See list of terms beneath "Post Adoption Resources" for "Subsidy".

**13. What is your state Web address for state-specific medical assistance information for children?**

Utah's state-specific medical assistance links: [www.health.utah.gov/html/utah\\_medicaid.html](http://www.health.utah.gov/html/utah_medicaid.html) and [www.health.utah.gov/medicaid/](http://www.health.utah.gov/medicaid/)